

Michael F. Easley
Governor



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EASLEY'S ANTI-TERRORISM EFFORTS MOVE FORWARD IN HOUSE

Raleigh – The House Appropriations Committee today approved Gov. Mike Easley's request for resources to further address the State's most urgent security needs. HB 1471 authorizes the Governor to access up to \$30 million of the rainy day fund to further enhance the ability of the state's terrorism task force to improve emergency response and preparedness in North Carolina. The bill also provides \$1.9 million in additional funds to the State's Division of Emergency Management.

"We were working prior to September to enhance and improve all of our emergency management and response plans," said Easley. "Following the events of September 11, we refocused those efforts and I directed my Task Force on terrorism to work around the clock to identify our most immediate needs and reprioritize their budgets and workforce to meet them. However, in order to enhance our capabilities further we need more funds."

"The federal government has indicated that they will make funds available to the state's within the next 90 days, but we simply cannot wait for Washington to act before we move forward with reinforcing our security efforts in North Carolina. As the federal funds become available, we will, to the extent possible, replenish the rainy day fund."

In addition to Easley's request for funding, state agencies have already significantly rearranged their spending priorities and taken action to bolster the state's preparedness and response plan.

"We are only asking for funding for those immediate needs that we could not finance with existing resources," said Easley. "Agencies have reprioritized and reallocated their expenditures and manpower to enhance the state's antiterrorism efforts."

The Governor's task force examined four areas of the state's antiterrorism strategies and recommended several critical steps to further boost the state's preparedness. The four areas that the task force is concentrating on are: threat reduction and assessment; emergency response; training; and public information.

"The most important weapon that we have in dealing with this situation is information," said Easley. "We need to reexamine the state's emergency planning through the lens of the 21st century. We are in a new day and our emergency response tactics must reflect that."

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